

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This research has examined how *Don't Look Up* (2021) depicts media disinformation and public ignorance as defining characteristics of post-truth society in contemporary America. From analyzing the narrative components and cinematography of this film, it can be concluded that the film is much more than just an entertaining comedy. It can also be stated that *Don't Look Up* (2021) is a cultural artifact because it shows the truth about the problems of contemporary society.

Answering the first research question, the analysis in this thesis found that *Don't Look Up* (2021) presents a sharp critique of media institutions that have undergone a shift in function, from information providers to profit-oriented entertainment. Through the broadcast of *The Daily Rip*, the film shows how the issue of the apocalypse is treated as light entertainment to maintain audience attention and increase ratings. Scenes such as the producer's direction to keep the show "fun," the host's flamboyant behavior, and the algorithmic system that continues to promote pop music when the world is on the brink of destruction, emphasize the dominance of business logic in the media in the post-truth era. Furthermore, Randall's transformation from an honest scientist to a popular media figure illustrates how scientific authority can be reconstructed into a commodity to control public opinion.

Regarding the second research question, the film demonstrates that public ignorance cannot be understood as a result of low public intelligence or a lack of

personal information. Rather, this ignorance is a product of a problematic and perpetuated digital system. The film depicts how algorithms promote entertainment gossip over science, internet culture turns Kate's emotions into humorous commodities, and political actors exploit scientific facts to reinforce identity divisions. Furthermore, the media equates science with partisan political opinion, thus obscuring scientific truth. Overall, these findings align with Schudson's (2008) argument that public ignorance in modern society is a structural problem arising from a combination of commercial media, digital platform mechanisms, and audience preferences for information that is pleasing to them.

Beyond these two key findings, the greatest strength of *Don't Look Up* (2021) lies in its ability to transform popular cinema into a medium for social critique. Adam McKay utilizes dark comedy and hyperbole not as a means of escape from reality, but as a way to present reality more sharply. The film deliberately pushes the absurdity of post-truth culture to its extreme: a society that chooses to deny facts in order to maintain a sense of comfort, even as the threat of planetary destruction looms large. Hosts who downplay crises, politicians who determine truth based on electoral survey results, and a public more interested in celebrity gossip than humanitarian issues are all stark reflections of contemporary social conditions. Through sharp satire, the film manages to do something that formal journalism rarely achieves: make the audience recognize something familiar in the reality they are already living in, then invite them to look at it more honestly through bitter laughter.

Of course, this study still has several limitations that could be further developed through further research. The study in this thesis only focuses on the socio-cultural context of the United States, namely the environment in which the film was produced. Therefore, further research could explore how audiences in various countries receive and interpret the satire presented in the film, especially in societies with different media systems and political cultures. Furthermore, given that this study only positions the film as a textual object, it would be interesting if future research combined a textual analysis approach with audience studies to understand direct audience responses. Furthermore, a comparative study of *Don't Look Up* (2021) and other contemporary films also has the potential to demonstrate whether narratives regarding the post-truth era have become a dominant pattern in global popular cinema.